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NOTES AND NEWS.

LORD WELBY, we understand, has now circulated to his colleagues upon the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure the opening section of a draft report. The draft will be taken into consideration at a meeting of the Royal Commission on Monday, June 5. We understand that this first section of the report is chiefly of the nature of a summary of the evidence relating to the financial machinery of the Government of India, and does not embrace much contentious matter.

The *Morning Leader* wrote yesterday (May 25):—

We are glad to learn that Lord Welby has at length issued to the members of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure the first portion of a draft report, which is to be taken into consideration at a meeting of the Commission on June 5. The delay of the Commission in preparing a report has been the subject of a good deal of unfavourable comment, which, however, has not always proceeded from persons conspicuously interested in the just management of Indian expenditure. Some of the critics have seemed, rightly or wrongly, to be more concerned to have a dry wipe at Lord Welby and at the County Council, of which he has accepted the chairmanship, than to expedite a fair apportionment of common charges between India and the United Kingdom. Be that as it may, the delay of the report has certainly been unusual, and we can well believe that it has in some respects hampered the work of the Indian Currency Committee. Now that the first section of a draft report has been issued it may be hoped that the Royal Commission will proceed with business-like despatch to the end of its labours. The evidence, it may be remembered, dealt with three main topics: (1) financial machinery; (2) the progress of expenditure; and (3) the apportionment of charges. Those who have taken the trouble to read such portions of the evidence as have been vouchsafed to the public have possibly come to the conclusion that some of the questions of chief importance are, in (1) the control of expenditure; in (2) the curtailment of extravagance in the military department; and in (3) a more equitable division between the British Treasury and the Indian taxpayers. As to (1), Lord Welby, if anybody, should be able to suggest a really efficient system of audit. As to (2) and (3) let it not be forgotten that English taxpayers, so far as their opinions could be gauged, were quite willing, as in the case of the Afghan War, to contribute a fair share towards the cost of the recent Imperial war beyond the North-West frontier. A fair apportionment of common charges would secure the effective supervision of Parliament over Anglo-Indian expenditure. But that, of course, is just what Anglo-Indian officials dread. Lord Welby and his colleagues, in spite of the rather arbitrary limits imposed upon the Commission, have it in their power to perform a public service of the first magnitude.

The *Pioneer* calls attention to another evil of the constant transfers of officials. Adverting to the cases of two young civilians one of whom had twelve transfers in four years, and the other nine in two years, our contemporary, while admitting that this experience may be of use in enabling them to choose a good district hereafter, and may even be likened to a travelling fellowship for the acquisition of useful miscellaneous information, points out a grave disadvantage, quite apart from the absence of local ties and sense of responsibility which has so often been deplored as the inevitable result of the system. This additional disadvantage is the obstacles such constant removals set to the learning of the languages of the country. "Dialects vary everywhere, and in Provinces where different languages are spoken in different districts, the young civilian transferred every quarter from one to another, has no chance of becoming proficient in any."

The letters which Dr. Blaney has lately addressed to the *Times of India* throw an unpleasant light on the way in which the new rules for plague prevention are carried out. Dr. Blaney had a patient, Ramdas Kultao, whom he found to be suffering from a very mild attack of plague. His surroundings were such as to enable him without risk to be treated in the house where he was living—in fact were precisely those in which, according to the declared policy of the Government, a plague patient is to remain in his own home. On the third day the fever subsided, and three days later the patient was convalescent. But then on the sixth day Dr. Blaney found a plague officer—not a medical man—with orders to remove the patient to a hospital at noon. Mr. Ramdas, who had been cheerful, was now in evident mental distress. On calling at the hospital on the next morning, Dr. Blaney found that his patient had died during the night and had been already cremated. Dr. Blaney unhesitatingly declares that the only possible cause of death was shock following on the fright caused by his forcible removal. The Government orders say that no exhausted, dying, or moribund patients are to be removed. The number who die in hospital within one hour after admission or who are found dead on admission affords a curious commentary on this case, and on the way in which the plague rules are carried out.

From the latest issue of the *Mahratta* which has come to hand it appears that the sufferings of that part of the population of Belgaum which had left the city are now at an end. It is suggested that the decision of Mr. Carmichael, the Collector, to allow the people to return home may possibly have been strengthened by his own personal experiences. On the night before leave to return to the city was granted Mr. Carmichael was himself in the fields. The gods were not unmindful of the sufferings of the people, and a heavy storm levelled the Collector's tent with the ground. After a wretched night he was certainly in a situation to sympathise with those who had lived for seven months in the field. However this may be, the decision of the Collector has given great satisfaction.

The Native Christians of India are protesting against a grievance which is undoubtedly well founded. They have to pay succession duty and take out probate or letters of administration, burdens from which their Hindu and Mahometan fellow-subjects are free. It is satisfactory to find that the *Hindu* warmly supports their cause and that Mr. Ananda Charlu, who rightly considers that he represents the whole Province of Madras and all its races and creeds, attended the meeting of protest and spoke in support. It is possible that the Native Christians in the past have been too ready to separate themselves from their countrymen in order to range themselves with their co-religionists from Europe, who have shown little pride in the connexion. But now that they see the financial disadvantages of being classed with Europeans, now that they find their countrymen ready to aid their just claims, they will perhaps be more ready to accept Mr. Ananda Charlu's wise advice and claim to be treated as other Indians.

A correspondent of the *Bengalee* sends a story from Burma which we must hope is exaggerated. A Burmese lady in an open plain near a temple at 3 p.m. on April 2 is said to have been assaulted by some soldiers of the West Kent Regiment and died a day or two after. Since then it is said that women have been afraid to go to the temple and are escorted there by the police. Two of the soldiers were arrested and an enquiry is said to be going on, but the Burmese papers are mute.

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* contrasts the old regulations against the ill-treatment of Indians with the light sentences which are now so common. In the last century a judge of the Sudder Dewany Adalat thus addressed an indigo-planter accused of oppressing a rayat and burning his hut:—

Our only apology for being in this country is to do good to its

people. We pretend that we are more enlightened, more cultured, more just, and more humane than they. We are here to show by our acts that we are really what we pretend to be; but if you oppress the natives in this wanton manner, forgetting that you bring disgrace upon the good name of the nation to which you belong, the best thing for you is to leave the country.

According to an official Notice of 1821, deportation to Europe was the punishment for beating an Indian. Our contemporary puts beside this the small fines now inflicted in such cases, and sometimes even when death has followed.

It may be interesting to reproduce the text of this notice, which appeared in the Calcutta *Government Gazette*, of Thursday, November 22, 1821, when the Marquis of Hastings was the Governor-General:—

FORT WILLIAM.

General Department, November 16, 1821.

The following extract from a Public General letter from the Honourable the Court of Directors, dated June 13, 1821, is published for general information:

With reference to our orders to your Presidency in the Military Department of April 14, 1813, October 20, 1815, and the 30th ultimo, which we consider to be equally applicable to our Civil Servants, we desire that you will take immediate steps for making those orders known to them with an intimation to all other Europeans residing in India that if any European not in our Service shall be proved to have been guilty of cruelty to any Native either by violently and illegally beating or otherwise maltreating him such European shall be immediately sent to England pursuant to the provision made in Act of the 53 Geo. III, cap. 155, clause 36.

By order of his Excellency the Most Noble the Governor-General in Council—C. Lushington, Secretary to Government.

Some of Dr. Fairbairn's impressions of India, confided to "an independent representative" (according to the *Mahratta*), are well worth permanent record, as well as careful consideration at the hands of the Indian authorities and their subordinates. Dr. Fairbairn acknowledges that he was "everywhere touched by the signal courtesy and intellectual quickness of the Hindus." He had "not nearly as much intercourse with them as he would have liked."

The grace and kindness and courtesy and patience with which they would hear even what they must have either disliked or greatly dissented from made them signally attractive, and gave them a charm which one would need to feel long before being able to thoroughly appreciate.

Naturally Dr. Fairbairn was specially impressed with the work of the missionaries, who, he thinks, "possibly do more to reconcile the Hindu to the British *régime* than any other single Western element operating in India."

In chivalry of will and nobleness of aim, in power to mould the Native mind even where it seemed most resistant, they may be said to represent the greatest feat achieved by the British people in India.

The political gentlemen had better look to their laurels. Last and by no means least:—

One thing is certain—that the Hindu mind will be influenced by no one who is out of sympathy with it, nor will it be served as it ought to be by anyone who simply loses himself in the strange conditions which so powerfully affect thought and will.

The social reform movement goes on quietly, as it ought to do. The Lucknow *Advocate* says:—

The great cry is that of intermarriages among the subsections of the same caste. Such intermarriages are few and far between, but the facts that they are not openly opposed, and that the community does not look with a feeling of distrust on the welding of different subsections, are hopeful signs.

Certainly. But if reformers are to "go on hammering," they will be wise to hammer discreetly. Once the idea is in the air, the thing is to let the people work it out in practice in their own good time and manner. The new system cannot be made; it can only be trained to grow.

There is a very able and instructive article on "Indian Finance from 1878 to 1898" in the current (May) number of the *Madras Review*. The writer enters a "strong protest against the persistent manner in which Sir James Westland has year after year tried to minimise the true significance of the deterioration that has taken place in recent years in the position of Indian finance." He objects to Sir James's starting-point of comparison, 1878, "seeing that in that year the country was just emerging from a fearful famine and was already preparing to plunge into a disastrous war." Still he tackles Sir James on his own ground, though he repudiates sterling calculations, and justly thinks that "so long as the people of this country buy and sell and pay their taxes in rupees so long an increase or decrease in their burdens must be measured in rupees and rupees alone."

The permanent debt in 1878 stood at 147·27 crores of rupees; and in 1898 at 242·61 crores—the sterling portion being converted into rupees at the respective rates of exchange of those years. The latter year thus shows an excess of 95·34 crores. During the twenty years, the capital outlay of Government on railways and irrigation amounted to 77·98 crores. The net deterioration in the financial position as indicated by the total volume of the permanent debt is, therefore, 17·36 crores of rupees. The argument is not affected by omission "of our temporary debt, as also of sums advanced by Governments to Municipalities and other bodies or the overdrawals of assisted companies," the two sides of this account balancing almost exactly. Again, taking the first four and the last four years of Sir James's twenty-year period, he finds that "the total net annual expenditure has during this period of sixteen years, increased by 12·72 crores, of which 11·30 crores is covered by the additional revenue raised, and 1·42 crores is left as a deficit." The additional revenue, however, is raised to 14·97 crores in consequence of the opium decrease of 3·67 crores; and, if Upper Burma be taken out, it works out at 13¾ crores. "The net increase in the revenne raised from the people of this country during this period of sixteen years is, therefore, represented by 33 per cent." of the net average revenue of 1878-79—1881-82. This is a very serious conclusion, and what makes it appalling is this, that "an examination of the heads of revenue under which increases have taken place will show that they are either forced increases, consequent upon enhanced taxation, or else they have little or no necessary connexion with the growing prosperity of the people." The net increase of average annual expenditure during the sixteen years is 12¾ crores, of which "more than half is under the head of army." These results are very different from Sir James Westland's.

When Indian publicists, however, speak of deterioration in the finances, they date from 1882-83—1884-85, the golden age of Lord Ripon. "But the policy of peace abroad and reform within which found favour with Lord Ripon was discarded by his measures in favour of reckless Imperialism, and most of the financial troubles of recent years are, in their opinion, due to this change of policy, which has resulted in the imposition of large additional burdens on the people for purposes not directly connected with their political, social, or economical advancement." The writer, therefore, compares the above years with Sir James Westland's last four years. We can only give the results. First, as to revenue:—

Thus we have in thirteen years a growth of 15·83 crores in the revenue raised from the people. Deducting about 1¼ crores for Upper Burma, we still have an increase of over 14½ crores on 40½ crores. This gives an increase of 36 per cent. in thirteen years in the revenue raised from the people of this country.

Next, as to expenditure:—

Thus there is an increase of 15¼ crores in total net expenditure, of which about 1¾ crores is for Upper Burma, leaving a net increase of 13½ crores over the old standard of expenditure in thirteen years. Of this 13½ crores, nearly 2 crores is left unprovided for as a deficit, giving us a little over 11½ crores as expenditure met by raising additional revenue. The net increase in military expenditure is represented by over 7¾ crores. Even deducting the excess charge for exchange in the second period over the standard of the first, we find the increase in military expenditure represented by about 5½ crores a year.

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (April 27) makes a very important criticism on the interpellations of Indian members of the Local Councils, and supports its argument with cogent illustrations. Our contemporary points out the necessity for the utmost care in framing the questions put to the Government. "Let it be borne in mind," it says, "that the Government takes a good deal of trouble in framing its answers." The art of questioning is by no means so simple as it looks; and the art of evading the points intended to be brought out by the questioner has been cultivated to a high degree of excellence. Something might be gained, no doubt, by a careful study of the questions put in the English Parliament, though even there the art is not always exhibited in its highest form. When an Indian member has done his best to keep the Government to the point, he would do well to submit his draft to several of his acutest friends, requiring them for the nonce to play the Government part of the keenest hostile criticism. But it is a poor achievement to a Government to circumvent the honourable efforts of

members to call attention to matters of substantial public concern.

The military authorities in India have just issued a new and amended set of "Rules for Press Correspondents at the seat of war." The rules betray the greatest possible anxiety to conceal from the public any information which the military authorities regard as inconvenient. In the first place, the Government of India is keenly anxious to avoid criticism by experts, as the following rules show:—

1. Officers and soldiers are prohibited from publishing, or communicating to the press, without special authority, either directly or indirectly, information relative to the numbers, movements, or operations of the troops, or details regarding fortifications, armaments, or experiments made in connexion with military matters. They are not to attempt to prejudice questions under investigation by the publication, anonymously or otherwise, of their opinions.

2. No officer belonging to the army in the field will, on any account, be permitted to act as newspaper correspondent, nor shall a correspondent be employed in any military capacity with the force.

3. Officers not belonging to the army in the field will be eligible, in special cases, for appointment as correspondents, but as a rule civilians only will be appointed. All correspondents must be furnished with a license under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief. In this license the paper or papers, or news agency for which the correspondent is agent will be stated.

The commander-in-chief having selected correspondents for the newspapers, he will proceed to sub-edit their copy for them:—

4. A correspondent may not write for papers other than those mentioned in this license. If he desires to do so, he must get leave, and the permission must be duly registered on his license.

5. Licenses will only be granted to those whom it is considered desirable to have as correspondents in the field. Only one correspondent will be allowed for each newspaper.

8. The use of any cypher is forbidden to correspondents.

9. A Staff Officer will be named to supervise all press matters. He will register all licenses and grant passes when necessary to all correspondents at the seat of war. He will be the channel of communication between the General Commanding-in-Chief in the field and the correspondents. Each newspaper having a correspondent in the field, or at the seat of war, will send this Staff Officer a copy of every issue of their papers, so that he may by examining their contents, be assured that the Press rules in the field are strictly adhered to.

10. All communications from correspondents to their newspapers or news agencies must be sent through and be countersigned by this Staff Officer, and he may detain or alter the communication should he deem it injurious to the interests of the army.

11. The military authorities will give correspondents as much information as they may consider advisable and consistent with their duty. The above-mentioned Staff Officer will fix an hour when correspondents may call upon him daily for information, and he will be authorised to tell them everything that can be published with safety to the army.

And if any attempt is made to evade the official sub-editor, the erring journalist will be promptly expelled:—

14. The General Commanding-in-Chief in the field has power to revoke, at any time, any license granted under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, should he consider it advisable in the interests of the army to do so. Correspondents are to be warned that any messages despatched, either from the field telegraph office or elsewhere, without the countersignature of the Staff Officer, mentioned in para. 9, will involve immediate withdrawal of the license.

The whole scheme recalls the methods recently adopted and enforced by Lord Kitchener, the despot of the Sudan. We would suggest that the same end might be equally well served with rather less trouble if all correspondents were warned off and the Commander-in-Chief himself circulated an official report, or laudation, to the newspapers. What do journalists at home think of these Russian or Turkish methods?

When the House of Commons in the usual course passed the Army Annual Bill the number of the regular forces of all ranks sanctioned by the House for the current year was given as 184,853. But of that total 74,000 are stationed in India, all the charges in respect of them being paid from Indian revenues. It is a pertinent question, which needs to be frequently renewed—how many members of the House when they vote that the regular forces of the British Crown shall number as above 184,853, are aware and bear in mind that more than one-third of that number are paid for by India, which thus subsidises the British army to that extent? These forces, generally comprising the best equipped and best organised portion of our military forces (which, while in India, receive a higher scale of pay and emoluments than the rest of the British troops at home or in the colonies) are always available at the call of the executive authorities here. They have in India better training-ground than anywhere else in the British Empire; but the Indian people have no say whatever as to the numbers stationed there, nor as to the cost, or nature of their equipment, their location, or the use that may be made of them. The fact that one-third of the British regular forces are always paid for and maintained by India, which has to keep us besides its nearly 130,000 native troops, is one of those great facts the financial and political bearing of which is hidden from the eyes of most of our public men by custom and vague general knowledge. In connexion with the recent strenuous debates on high finance and the growth of unproductive expenditure it seems desirable once more to draw attention to this habitually ignored factor in our imperial system.

The *Pioneer*, commenting on a recent pamphlet setting forth the claims of the Oudh Taluqdars, who regard the imposition of cesses "during the course of a settlement as a violation of a solemn engagement, and upon the revision of a settlement as an intolerable hardship," suggests that if the landowners were taken into the confidence of the Government some satisfactory arrangement could probably be devised. This is an excellent suggestion, which might perhaps be available for other classes and other grievances. But we fear the Taluqdars will find little consolation in the argument of our contemporary that "the growth of expenditure is inevitable in every civilised Government." Surely the growth of expenditure should bear some proportion to the growth of wealth. On one point the *Pioneer* considers that the Taluqdars have a strong case. Under our predecessors the Government contributed towards the maintenance of the village police, which now falls entirely on the landowners. The *Pioneer* even says "it is not pleasant to an Englishman to read that in this respect our Government is less generous and fair than the Native Government which it has superseded." But what heresy is this! As if our Government could be in any way inferior to those that existed in India before our time!

The Government of India has issued new mining and prospecting rules, which according to Reuter's Simla correspondent, "afford marked facilities to all persons, syndicates, and companies," and "are regarded as the first fulfilment of the Viceroy's promise to encourage private enterprise and concessions." The details are not available, but everybody seems to be pleased. There is another promise, however, far more solemn, august, and wide-reaching than the Viceroy's, and that is the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. While we welcome every rule that will loosen a fetter of enterprise in India, we should be still more glad to see an adequate effort at fulfilment the great Indian Charter. While Lord Curzon enjoys the credit of these smaller matters of improvement, he may usefully contemplate some firm steps towards the willing observance of the greater matters of the Imperial promises.

There was a note of deep pathos in the appeal of Dr. Mohendro Lal Sircar at the recent meeting of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science. "It is now exactly 30 years," he said, "since your humble servant thought it his duty to endeavour to impress upon his countrymen the necessity of the cultivation of science as the best, and, under the circumstances, the only means by which the people of India could be regenerated and elevated above their present degraded level." The Association has been in existence during these 30 years, and it has been in working order for 23 years, its activities being mainly in the form of lectures. Now that Mr. Tata has come forward with his munificent benefaction at Bombay, Dr. Sircar naturally stirs up his Calcutta friends to a just sense of their duty, seeing that "Bombay is threatening to take the shine out of Bengal."

From the very beginning I have been telling you (he said) that, in order to enable the Association to do its legitimate work—that of research—you must have men devoting their whole time and attention to special subjects, and that you must provide for them. But, somehow or other, I have not been able to convince you of this necessity.

The spur of Bombay rivalry may effectively reinforce Dr. Sircar's appeal. Happily the new President of the Association, Sir John Woodburn, is in hearty sympathy with the objects of the institution, and has professed his "special and enthusiastic desire to assist in any way that is in his power any projects for practical scientific instruction of the people." Dr. Sircar, we hope, will soon see his work prospering in his hands.

A WRONG STILL UNREDRESSED.

THE surprise with which the public learned in August, 1897, that two prominent citizens of Poona had been arrested and kept in prison without any definite charge being formulated against them, and without any intention on the part of the Government to bring them to trial, would have been much intensified if it had been suspected that nearly two years later they would still be held under painful restrictions, and would still be ignorant of the real reason of the Government for inflicting such sufferings on them. We seem to have passed from the British Empire and the nineteenth century to the worst times of the French monarchy; though in one respect that monarchy has been surpassed in infamy, for it does not seem to have been the custom of French Ministers to blacken the characters of the victims of the Bastille, or to make public charges which their prisoners were given no opportunity to refute. The Natus are still deprived of full liberty; the various charges brought forward to justify the Government, have been neither withdrawn nor substantiated; the illegalities committed have not been atoned for. Thus the great wrong of which they have been the victims still exists. In baldly recapitulating the main facts of the case we aim at showing how necessary it is in the name alike of public justice and of English honour that the wrong should cease.

The Sirdar Natu and his brother were arrested on July 28, 1897, under Regulation XXV of the year 1827, which authorises the detention of prisoners without trial when necessary for—among other reasons admittedly inapplicable to the present case—the security of the British dominions from internal commotion. The revival of this Regulation, which had not been acted on for a long time, caused much surprise and the question was raised in Parliament on August 5, in the form of an Amendment to the motion to go into committee on the East India Revenue Accounts. In his reply Lord George Hamilton, after referring to the murders of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst, immediately went on to say:—

> The two Native gentlemen who had been arrested were notorious men, and this was not the first time that they had been brought before the notice of the public. He believed that the authorities at Bombay were within their rights in the action which they had taken, and that the result of the proceedings would be to unravel the plot that had been formed.

Now if this were intended as a defence of the arrest of the Natus, and no other was offered, it could only mean that they were concerned in or at least had a guilty knowledge of a conspiracy to murder—as serious a charge as could well be brought against anyone, a charge which should have been either adhered to or retracted. But on February 18, 1898, speaking during the debate on the Address, Lord George Hamilton said:—

> The brothers Natu did everything in their power to stir up unrest, and they worked against the (plague) regulations, the enforcement of which could alone save the people. After the murder of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst the public were put in possession of evidence of a serious plot.

From the mention of the murders the natural expectation would be that the plot was a plot to murder, and that the speaker was repeating the explanation of the arrests that he gave in the preceding August. But he went on to give the "evidence," and it was of quite another kind. One piece of evidence was the deposition of a nurse that she had received a threatening letter "purporting to be signed by one of the brothers Natu." The letter, according to her deposition, threatened her with the loss of her practice as a midwife if she assisted in search operations, and this practice she in the end lost, though only, as was pointed out in the Indian press, after most of the richer inhabitants, who alone could afford to pay for a European nurse, had fled from the city. Now here we have a conspiracy to murder reduced to a conspiracy, ill authenticated, to interfere with the practice of a midwife, while not only is the former much more serious charge not withdrawn but the second charge, trifling in comparison, is introduced by a misleading allusion to the murders.

The second piece of "evidence" adduced by the Secretary of State was that one of the brothers Natu had attempted "to induce the police to declare that a woman who had really died from disease had been violated by a British soldier and had died in consequence." Lord George continued:—

> In dealing with a crisis of such magnitude as the plague, if they found these tricks played the Government had a right to prevent such men from being at large. The Government had only taken this exceptional action with the greatest reluctance. So long as the plague lasted it would not be safe to liberate the brothers Natu.

Now here conspiracy to murder has become "tricks played." Moreover the arrest of the two Natus is justified on evidence which at best points to one only. The Regulation of 1827 is intended for cases which cannot be dealt with in the ordinary course of law. But the more serious of these two charges—subornation of perjury—is obviously well within the jurisdiction of the Courts. Why then was not the person incriminated prosecuted in the ordinary course? Was it because the "evidence" could not be relied on? Yet this charge, which was never publicly investigated, and which the Natus have never been given the opportunity to meet, is brought forward in February to justify what had been defended by a still more serious charge in August. We are told of the reluctance with which this action had been taken, but there appears to be as much reluctance to abandon this "exceptional action," and to return to the ordinary course of law. Finally, it is asserted that it would not be "safe" to liberate the Natus while the plague lasts. Since their arrest the plague in Poona has died out and again appeared, the Government has abandoned the more odious part of its plague policy, and the people of the city have been declared by no less a person than the Governor of Bombay "the most patient people in the world." Yet it would not be "safe" to free the Natus completely. Is it intended that the restrictions shall continue till the plague becomes an extinct disease which can never return to Poona?

On April 21, 1898, Lord George Hamilton declared that the detention of the Natus would continue until the Government of Bombay were satisfied that the "public tranquillity would not be endangered by their release." Thus a hope was afforded that they would not have to wait in prison till the plague was extinct. As for the assassination conspiracy, the imprisonment of the Natus has been of no use in unravelling it. Far from any part in such a plot being brought home to these prominent citizens, the trial and conviction of one of the murderers showed that whatever plot there was lay in circles with which the Natus had no connexion. Moreover, the judge who tried the case declared that there was no evidence of a "widespread conspiracy."

When Lord George Hamilton gave his answer on April 21 the Natus had already been nearly nine months in close confinement. The elder Natu has published his correspondence with the Government, and from that may be learned the sufferings that he went through, the dignity and patience with which he bore them, and the persistence with which he asserted his innocence and begged to meet his accusers face to face. At last, early in May, the prison doors were opened, but not to full liberty. The prisoners were not allowed to return home. They were confined to the district of Belgaum, and their estates were not restored to them. The elder Natu found his health suffering from the climate. It was of no avail. The plague came to Belgaum. The Natus could not leave the Collectorate. Above all the charges so recklessly made have never been withdrawn, nor has any occasion of defence been permitted. It is but a small addition to all this that in carrying out its policy the Government has itself been guilty of illegal action. Not only was joint family property attached, in which a third brother was interested, but moveable property was taken possession of, though the Regulation of 1827 gave no authority whatsoever for this proceeding. In July, 1898, this moveable property had not all been returned, in spite of the admissions and the promises of Lord George Hamilton.

Here then is a story of arbitrary imprisonment, of illegality, and of injustice such as it might have been thought the annals of only the worst despotisms would furnish. For nine months these men lay in gaol without being even informed by the authorities of the charges against them, while Lord George Hamilton blackened their character by contradictory assertions to which they were never permitted to reply. And now twelve months after the prison gates have been opened they are left under the stigma of unproved accusations and of harassing and insulting restrictions. Well may all India wonder. Well may even the Anglo-Indian Press cry out upon the Government. The *Times of India*, the strongest supporter of the Government and its policy, has declared

> the time has come for the Government either to bring the detention

of these men to an end, or to take the public more into their confidence in regard to it than they have yet done.

And again:—

For if so light a restraint as confinement within the limits of a spacious Collectorate is sufficient to make these men harmless to the State, they cannot now be very dangerous persons.

But, hitherto, the Bombay Government has refused to listen even to its own supporters. The *Times of India* has put forward its unanswerable arguments in vain. And Lord George Hamilton on April 20 of the present year took refuge in the pretence, so often belied by his conduct, that he "had no intention of interfering with the discretion of the Government of Bombay." The Natus are still suffering in health, in fortune, and above all in reputation. Is it not time that this wrong should be redressed, and that these untried prisoners, these accused who have been permitted no defence, should be restored to full freedom?

THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

LAST week we took occasion to remark generally on the important "Note of Dissent" attached to the Report of the Select Committee on the Calcutta Municipality Bill. It is well worth while to look somewhat more closely to the main points urged by the dissenting members, Messrs. Norendro Nath Sen and Surendra Nath Banerjea. The original Bill has been so largely altered in Committee that the Bill now reported "is, with the exception of the constitutional clauses, altogether a different measure." Some 218 sections out of 639—fully one-third of the Bill—"are entirely new, while considerable modifications have been made in many of the sections which have been retained," and the twenty schedules have been no less transformed. This simple fact seems to speak significantly as to the crudeness of the original provisions and the indecent haste with which the Bill was rushed into the political arena. It also shows how necessary are the suggestions of the dissenting members "that the views of the Corporation and other public bodies should again be invited, so as to give effect to the orders of the Government of India that the fullest discussion should be invited," and "that these views should be further considered by the Select Committee." For such procedure there is ample precedent in the Municipal Bills of 1876 and 1888 and in the Mofussil Municipal Bill of 1874, not one of which was of superior importance or contemplated more fundamental changes. We should anticipate that the Lieutenant-Governor will be readily disposed to such a course, which would obviously ease the difficult position in which he has been placed by the precipitate action of his predecessor. Lord Curzon of Kedleston, moreover, has a perfectly free hand, and in case the Bill should not be purged of its obnoxious elements in the Bengal Chamber it will be quite open to him to give just effect to the reasonable contentions of the people of Calcutta which have been so fully expressed and so clearly demonstrated.

The large alterations in the Bill, useful as they may be, have unfortunately not touched the most essential points with adequate effect. "The constitutional part of the Bill," according to the Indian Association—and everybody agrees—"is undoubtedly the most important, and the one in which the most serious departure from the present law is observable." Messrs. Sen and Banerjea point out that "only in regard to two matters has any concession been made in this part of the Bill, and the last of these concessions is nullified by the powers reserved to Government under the sections relating to control." The first concession is this: that, whereas the first draft omitted the office of vice-chairman (usually filled by an Indian gentleman) and divested the Corporation of its existing right to make the superior appointments, the amended Bill restores the vice-chairman (though with lowered status and curtailed powers) and allows the Corporation to retain the power to appoint the engineer, the health officer, the assessor, the surveyor, the collector, the joint-collector, and the licence officer. The second concession is that "the Corporation is to pass the Budget, which is to be framed by the General Committee, and the orders of the Corporation in respect of the Budget are to be final." But the financial control thus given with one hand is taken away with the other. For, in the control sections, it is laid down that whenever the local Government is of opinion that any of the duties imposed on any municipal authority has not been performed, or has been performed in an imperfect or unsuitable manner, or has not been adequately provided for, the local Government may interfere, and, if necessary, direct the enhancement of the rates and even the raising of a loan. In the present temper of Government this provision strangles the Corporation, though in ordinary times its operation would be a matter of rational accommodation. It is a strange commentary on Sir John Woodburn's appreciation of the work of the present Corporation, as expressed at the opening of the Session of the Bengal Council:—

They (the present popular delegates) are entitled to the credit—and it is a high one—of realising the value and necessity of the great schemes which have been drawn up for their approval, such as those for the drainage of the city and the construction of the Harrison Road. They have not shrunk from the heavy taxation which was needed to bring these beneficent projects into effect; and I myself had evidence of the high public spirit and laborious circumspection which many members of the Corporation bring to the discharge of their municipal duties.

Did not Sir John, then, mean what he said? Or is it to be supposed that these highly public-spirited and laboriously circumspect men really require to be made to work with a rope round their necks?

There are three principal features of the Bill, so far as they affect the constitutional clauses, to which the dissenting members of the Select Committee take exception. The first is this:

(1) The withdrawal from the Corporation of the power to make the superior appointments, except those already referred to by us.

The "Statement of Objects and Reasons" throws no light upon this point. Mr. Risley, however, in his speech introducing the Bill supported the provision by a reference to Sir Henry Harrison, who is reported to have said that the Municipality "failed most conspicuously in personal questions, when each Commissioner is subjected to private solicitation and unwholesome pressure, and gives his vote under the influence of motives, very few of which are consistent with the well-being of the city." But the criticism applies, more or less, to all cities; and, as Messrs. Sen and Banerjea point out, Sir Henry Harrison did not look for a remedy in such a deprivation of the Corporation. Which process is the easier—to canvass 12 persons or 75 persons? Which result is the more probable—to get a job perpetrated by a dozen members acting in secrecy or by six dozen acting in the full light of day? Besides, there has been but one appointment disapproved by Government in twenty-three years. Nothing could show more convincingly that no change whatever is either necessary or desirable.

(2) The supersession of the authority of the Corporation over the proceedings of the Executive and the General Committee; and the creation of three co-ordinate authorities perfectly independent of each other in by far the bulk of the functions assigned to them.

This "is a novel feature in the municipal system of Bengal, and is foreign to municipal government in England." Instead of strengthening the Executive, which is the ostensible object of the Bill, this device will render it irresponsible; and irresponsibility is very like a contradiction in terms to local self-government, and in any case is the very worst form of government. But here the irresponsibility is accentuated by delegation of powers. The chairman cannot personally exercise all his functions, and such as he does not personally exercise "must be delegated to subordinate officers who no longer will be subjected to the watchful supervision of the ward commissioners and the controlling authority of the Corporation." One can, therefore, "readily explain the consternation and alarm which these provisions of the Bill have created in the minds of the Indian ratepayers." The new provision contemns the lessons of administrative experience. The establishment of three co-ordinate authorities in one and the same institution is a stroke of fatuity that it would be an insult to our readers' intelligence to discuss. This part of the Bill is based on the Bombay Municipal Act; but, as Messrs. Sen and Banerjea demonstrate beyond question, "it was clearly understood by the distinguished Indian gentlemen (the late Mr. Telang and Mr. Pherozeshah Mehta) who took part in the enactment of that law, that the Executive of the Corporation were to be responsible to the Corporation and subject to the general control of that body." Referring to the construction of the Tansa Water Works, Mr. Mehta declared "that the credit of this remarkable success justly belongs in the main to the constitutional scheme under which the Corporation carries

on the administration by the hands of its executive officer, *constantly and continuously controlling, criticising, supervising, and directing him.*" "To revert from a scheme of such promise and performance to the discredited principles of the Act of 1865," added Mr. Mehta, "would be a blunder indeed." The Calcutta Bill, as it stands, commits that very blunder, in the teeth of both theory and experience.

(3) The constitution of the General Committee, in which the representatives of the ratepayers will be in a hopeless minority.

The General Committee, which is to be the real governing body of the Corporation, is to be independent of the Corporation. That very extraordinary fact, in and by itself, ought to be the instant condemnation of the system. Who ever heard of such a thing, outside India? The Committee now consists of eighteen members; the Bill reduces it to twelve. Sir Henry Harrison fixed the number at eighteen, and was prepared to "go up to twenty or even twenty-four," and, as Sir John Woodburn himself has said, "no man has ever had such long and favourable opportunity of judging it." But it never entered into this experienced administrator's head to reduce the number to twelve. Besides, we are not aware of any untoward result attributable to the eighteen. But "the most important change in connexion with the General Committee is that which seeks to provide for the adequate representation of 'the three chief interests in Calcutta,' and reduces the representatives of the ratepayers to one-third of the entire number"—that is, four! We have already shown the absurdity of this scheme in every possible light. As Messrs. Sen and Banerjea point out, the interests of trade and of Government are identical, not distinct: they are centred in sanitation alone. Yet these are to have, between them, double the representation of the ratepayers, who constitute the bulk of the population, contribute the bulk of the municipal taxation, possess far the largest financial stake in the town, and are the permanent body of citizens. The scheme is a monstrous abrogation of the elementary principles of self-government.

It is unnecessary to follow Messrs. Sen and Banerjea into collateral details, even though not a few of these are very important. These three main points of constitutional change demonstrate the arbitrary action of the Government and prepare one amply for the significant conclusion that "when this Bill has been passed into law we are afraid few Indians possessed of self-respect and imbued with a due regard for public opinion will consent to act as municipal commissioners." In that event how will the government of Calcutta be carried on?

MORE SIDELIGHTS ON THE INDIAN FAMINE.

By E. H. Pickersgill, M.P.

THREE more volumes of the appendix to the report of the Indian Famine Commission have now been published, relating respectively to the Punjab, the Central Provinces, and Bombay. I propose to call attention to some features of special interest in the melancholy story which these Blue-books disclose. In the first place, it is clear that the Government have taken upon themselves, owing to their method of financing and arranging budget grants, entirely to upset the recommendations of the old Famine Commission. What is actually done in practice is just the very reverse of what was recommended by the Famine Commission and is contemplated by Famine Codes. The Commission laid down the sound principle that relief measures should be taken betimes. Directly there is a fear of famine in any district, they said, while distress is comparatively light and only amounts to severe scarcity, develop without change of system such public works as are of a suitable nature, *i.e.*, all which involve much coolie labour and little skilled labour, and thus you may enable the people to tide over the season of distress, and obviate altogether the necessity for famine work in the proper sense of that term. Such were the recommendations. Now let us see what is the practice. It is forcibly described in the following extract from a report by Mr. Higham:—

Instead of expanding ordinary public works to prevent severe scarcity becoming famine, *what is actually done is at once to restrict expenditure on such works.* What is practically said is this, "we will give you nothing, if all you want to do is to prevent scarcity becoming famine, but declare *famine* and we will give you anything you like?" The officers are helpless, they see the severe scarcity, they see too that expansion of ordinary work would do all that is necessary to meet that scarcity, if supplemented by village aid to the dependents, but this may not be done. So famine work has to be started with all its disadvantages, and the evils which it entails, all of which might in many cases be prevented if only that which the Famine Commission and Famine Codes enjoin were allowed to be done.

An instance may be given of the way in which the present rules of finance tell against the best forms of relief. If work is done in connexion with a project which has a capital account, the whole normal cost of this work must be entered under the head of "Productive Works not charged against revenue." Naturally officers will not recommend such works to be undertaken if the whole normal cost is to be charged as a debit for ever to the capital account, whereas, if the capital account were to be debited with three-fourths or one half only of the normal cost, the case would have been different. Hence it happens that works which are of no conceivable use to anybody are put in hand, because they can be charged to "Famine Relief," instead of works which are desirable and useful, although they are not worth in full their cost at normal rates.

Secondly, the evidence contained in these Blue-books strongly confirms the impression created by the previous volumes, that the establishment of great relief works at a distance from the homes of the people is not an adequate or satisfactory remedy. Mr. F. J. Cooke, Deputy Commissioner, Bilaspur, stated that it is not possible to induce more than a small percentage of the distressed population of a village or tract to seek relief upon a distant work. He said that he had himself frequently attempted to persuade people who were obviously starving to seek employment on a relief-work fifteen or twenty miles distant, but never with success. The people cling to their hearths and homes with a tenacity which is characteristically Indian, in spite of starvation which stares them in the face. Moreover, the objection is not merely sentimental. It is said that the houses of those who leave the villages are often pulled down by the malguzar or by their neighbours, and their land (if they have any) given to others. Mr. Laurie, Deputy Commissioner, Raipur, stated that in his district when the people returned from the works they found in many instances their houses in ruin.

On the other hand several civil servants of high position express the opinion that village relief should be given a much more prominent place in the code than it now occupies. It should be regarded (they say) as a security against a failure of other measures to reach the destitute as well as the principal means of relieving the helpless classes of the population. It is suggested that the officer in charge should be empowered to place on relief any person who had at the time no means of livelihood, if there was no immediate prospect of his getting work. Under the existing rule an able-bodied man cannot be put on gratuitous relief until he has become so weak as to be unable to labour. Thus it may happen that he cannot be entered on the relief list by the inspector on his (say) fortnightly visit to the village, and by the time the inspector comes round again the man may be beyond saving.

As it will no doubt be objected that gratuitous relief is demoralising, it may be well to quote upon this point the opinion of Mr. Blakesley, Deputy-Commissioner, Damoh. He says:—

I was myself inclined (and I fancy most persons who have studied the history of the English Poor Laws would be similarly inclined) to overrate the demoralising effect of giving gratuitous relief and the danger of the State's finding itself with a permanent pauper population on its hands. I think these fears were exaggerated. Demoralisation there is, no doubt, but it is not so widespread nor so permanent as might be expected in an European country.

The opinion of another civil servant, namely, Mr. Fuller, Commissioner, Jabulpur Division, is much more emphatic upon this head. He states that

there has been nothing to indicate that the grant of gratuitous relief demoralises the people. Its discontinuance was cheerfully accepted, and careful enquiries have failed to show that private charity did not return to its responsibilities.

In the perusal of these volumes one question must, I think, persistently arise in the mind of the candid reader. It is this: would not better results have been obtained in coping with the famine if the co-operation of Indians themselves had been more largely used? According to the Famine Code, the term "District Authority" means the Deputy Commissioner of the district, either acting alone or in concert with local committees or local bodies as the Local Government may determine. The Govern-

ment of India, acting on the recommendation of the Famine Commission, have laid down that intelligent and leading men of the district should be invited to assist the District Officer in providing information and investigating the condition of the poorer classes, and also in superintending the administration of Famine Relief. In the late famine the help of the people was very largely accepted in the distribution of charitable money. Committees and sub-committees of malguzars and mahajans were formed, and the evidence shows that on the whole they did their work with intelligence, zeal, and integrity. But the question which I desire to raise is whether the services of the leading men in each locality might not be enlisted with great advantage in connexion with the relief provided by the State. During the last twenty years education has made great progress, and public spirit has been evoked. The principles of local self-government have been tried and found successful. Surely the time has come when committees of persons directly interested in the villages in which they live might be trusted.

The evidence of the Indian witnesses which these volumes contain is specially interesting, for to a large extent it enables us to look at the famine and the circumstances connected with it through the eyes of the Indians themselves. It is evident that the exportation of vast quantities of food, contrasted with the fact that considerable sections of the population have had to subsist on jungle products at a season of the year when taken as a staple diet they become mere poison, rankles in the mind of the people. One of the most interesting passages in these volumes is the striking and detailed account, given by Sirish Chander Rai Chowdhri, of the real causes of the distress in the Jabalpur district, a part of the Central Provinces which suffered most severely in the recent famine. He says that "it is impossible to lay the blame solely on the clouds." He shows that from the year 1893-4 revenue was payable on 13½ lacs of acres, whereas not more than 10½ lacs were (during the last ten years) ever cultivated, and that the assessment was made on 16 annas crop of the whole area, but the outturn never exceeded an average of 10 or 11 annas on the cropped area. And he points out that, while the participators in the agricultural produce have made repeated enhancements of assessment, not a rupee has been put to improve the soil or to educate the rayats in their trade. Hence he concludes that "continued short outturns and a heavy enhancement of land taxes are more at the bottom of the late distress than the dry winter of 1894 or 1896, or the excessive moisture of 1895, or the late monsoon of 1896."

OUR LONDON LETTER.

(FROM A PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

NOW that Parliament is taking its second short holiday during the Session, and now that the end of the Session is in view, it may be fitting to review, or rather to glance at, the work of the last four months. I am of opinion that the Session so far could be best summed up in a paraphrase of Longfellow—"little attempted, nothing done." Somehow or other big, overwhelming majorities in the House do not mean business. I have watched carefully each day's proceedings since the opening of this Session. It was also my lot to watch day by day the doings of the late Parliament. The contrast is most striking. To begin with, the late Parliament met with a precarious majority for the Liberals of about forty—a majority which often came down to about fifteen or a dozen. This Parliament came in with about 150 majority for the Tories, and the numbers are still in theory some 140, and they would be so in reality if a direct vote of want of confidence in the Government were moved by the Opposition.

Yet there is a strange contrast between the spirit of that little majority in 1893 and the hulking majority of 1895. It was "a crowded hour of glorious life" under Gladstone. His courage was equal to anything and to everything. He scorned the notion that politics means mere tactics, and win or lose he always aimed high. This sort of thing inspires a party, and it will be remembered that so long as Mr. Gladstone was in the House and in politics that small majority kept together and beat a large, powerful and relentless Opposition again and again. What a contrast there has been since those days. The Tories are overwhelmingly powerful so far as numbers go, yet they have had to surrender, to compromise, and to come to terms again and again. Mr. Balfour, early in the Parliament, stated openly that there are dangers in connexion with too large a majority, and his experience has proved the truth of his dictum. When the majority is small every man feels called upon to be in his place, to back his leaders and to give his vote. But when there is a great sprawling and hulking majority of about 140, men become slack. Members on the Government side begin to say "What is the use of pairing? If I go away for the evening I shall not be missed. The majority is so huge that one, or even a score, do not make any practical difference."

Nor is that by any means the only trouble attaching to a huge majority. You cannot get such an overwhelming preponderance of men on one side without getting a variety of views among those men, and a dangerous variety. Let me take the London Tory members for instance—and I single them out because I know more about them than about most. Many, nay most, of the London Tory members are gentlemen who know and care as much about the difference between Liberalism and Toryism as a dog knows and cares about bimetallism. They wanted seats in the House, and they saw that in 1895 Toryism was the correct card. So they called themselves Tories and dodged into the House. But the constituencies of the East of London are by no means Tory constituencies in the real and old-fashioned meaning of the word, and these members have had to show again and again that they are not really Tories. Indeed, some of them have been forced by their relentless constituents to advocate such democratic proposals as make even the sternest and most advanced Radical "gasp and stare."

And again the Lancashire Tories are not exactly the real thing, from a party point of view. The Government deceived Lancashire in the most disgraceful manner at the general election, and the Government has been, in consequence, receiving its reward. I happen to know that the reassembling of the House after the Whitsun recess was not fixed for May 31 until there had been serious, and even furious, discussions among the Ministers. On that day the Committee Stage of the Half Timers Bill, introduced by that brilliant lawyer Mr. Robson, comes on. The second reading, as the reader may remember, was carried by a huge majority, and indeed such interest was shown in the matter that the Government could not afford to ignore it. Yet here again Lancashire is a thorn in the flesh to the Ministers. For Lancashire, which gives itself such airs about leading English opinion, is the one county in which the exploiting of little children, the poor little wretches known as "half-timers," is most general. So the Government is in this position—if it helps on the Half-Timers Bill it may offend Lancashire, but on the other hand, seeing that this Bill passed its second reading in the House by a tremendous majority the Government cannot afford to ignore the subject. Everyone knows what the Government hopes for. It would piously thank Providence, if by any chance the House failed to make a quorum on May 31, just as it did a Wednesday or two ago. But such hopes are all in vain. There will certainly be a House on May 31—indeed I know forty members and more who are determined to see the thing through, so that poor Mr. Balfour will have either to state what the Government thinks, or will have once more to make the humiliating announcement that while he has views of his own he cannot undertake to offer advice or guidance to the House.

And while these matters trouble the Government at home they have their difficulties abroad also, and chiefly, just at present, in connexion with the Transvaal Republic. It is the fashion to denounce as a little Englander anyone who recognises that that Republic has certain rights of its own. Nicknames have no terrors for me, and I don't care how little an Englander I may be called—I have all through our Transvaal troubles admired President Kruger immensely. Over here certain papers have taken a delight in describing him as a snuffling and canting hypocrite. They have drawn pictures of him wearing an ancient hat, short trousers, white socks, and all the other paraphernalia of the stage psalm-singing scoundrel. This is exactly the manner in which Cromwell was treated in his day—but as Macaulay says, they had little reason to laugh who met Cromwell either on the field of battle or in the hall of

debate. And though the confession proves me to be a most infinitesimal Englander I must say that so far President Kruger has got the better of us both in war and in diplomacy. It is not nice to think that we have been beaten in fair fight and checkmated in negotiations by this old gentleman at whom our smart young journalists are never tired of sneering, but facts are ugly things sometimes, and there is no escaping from this particular fact. Mr. Kruger has so far been too much for our pet "Artful Dodger" in the political world, Mr. Chamberlain. However much Mr. Jesse Collings in particular and the world in general may regret the fact it remains a fact that one cannot ignore.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"INDIANS AT THE INNS OF COURT."

To the Editor of "India."

Sir,—If Mr. C. M. Thacker will refer again to my letter in your issue of May 12 he will see that I did not "ask why the Inns of Court should take upon themselves the function of giving instruction in Indian law." On the contrary I expressly said that my object was "not to dissuade anybody from trying to encourage the study of Indian law in England, but to deprecate the discouragement of it in India." I should be very glad indeed to see an Indian Law Readership re-established. What I protest against, in the interest of "India for the Indians," is the notion that a call to the English, Scotch, or Irish Bar should constitute *per se* a qualification for practice and judicial appointments in India, as is practically the case at present. The injustice of this would be slightly disguised, but not materially diminished, by introducing a modicum of Indian law into the Bar examination as an optional alternative for some branch of English law. Obviously it could only be an insignificant modicum, not in the least approaching the comprehensiveness and stringency of the pleader's examination as now conducted in India; yet it is to be accepted as a guarantee of fitness for the higher, and presumably more difficult, functions of an advocate of the higher court, and for all the lucrative appointments to which that title opens the door. The principle for which I contend is that modern India is not as Lagos or Sierra Leone, where an elementary knowledge of English law, plus a few local regulations, may for all I know be as good an outfit as the nature of the business requires, and where an efficient local law school is probably out of the question; but that India possesses a distinct, characteristic, and rapidly growing legal system of its own, an abundant supply of Native legal talent, and an effective system of training already in force for the lower grades of the legal profession. It has passed the stage of being a suitable dumping-ground for second-rate English practitioners; and the steps taken to exclude these will, naturally and properly, also prevent young Indians from gaining an unfair advantage over their compeers by the mere fact of spending two or three years in England. In short, a complete course of legal study, regulated by Indian authorities with exclusive reference to Indian requirements, should be obligatory for all Advocates of the High Courts, and *mutatis mutandis* for all candidates for judicial appointments. All examinations connected with this course should ordinarily be held in India. It will be time enough to consider the propriety of allowing exactly equivalent examinations to be held in London for the convenience of British-born candidates for the Indian Bar, when effect has been given to the resolution of the House of Commons in favour of holding a simultaneous examination in India for the Indian Civil Service. In any case such examinations would be quite independent of the present Bar examination. On the other hand there could be no objection to British-born candidates commencing their study of Indian law in England, even if they had to go to India for examination; and such candidates would no doubt be very glad to have a competent instructor provided for them by the Inns of Court.—I am, Sir, etc.,

May 22. Roland K. Wilson.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

To the Editor of "India."

Sir,—The one real grievance against the Indians in South Africa is that they tried to block the way when Natal was granted self-government. There is a Canarese proverb which says, "the family before the individual, the village before the family and the district before the village." There we have the fundamental principle of the whole duty of a good citizen.

It is the proud boast of the English Catholics that, when Spain threatened England with an invasion, though the Catholics at the time were most cruelly oppressed by their Protestant brethren under Queen Elizabeth, they forgot all their disqualifications and stood up as one man for their Queen and the country that was so unmercifully ill-treating them, though the invader was of their own faith and the husband of their late Catholic Queen.

The white colonists of South Africa are now trying to get better terms for the Uitlanders in the Transvaal. It is also true that there is not the least intention of their benefiting the Indians who are also Uitlanders, should these much sought for concessions be granted either through the good offices of the Crown or otherwise by an ultimatum.

In fact it looks monstrous and so brazen-faced that the white colonists should approach the throne with a prayer for a redress of their grievances while they themselves are daily inflicting "more grievous grievances" upon her Majesty's Indian subjects dwelling amongst them.

It looks like the prayer of the tiger not to be shot on the plea that it is cruel and wrong to kill God's creatures. The boldness of the plea takes one's breath away. And for such audacious ingenuity alone, if for nothing else, that tiger deserves to live. One tiger more or less will not seriously affect the commissariat of the jungle. But woe betide the common jungle folk that would thrust their paw at this juncture and point out the fallacy of the tiger's logic. That tiger will not always be on a suppliant knee.

Let us too then beware. But in our own interests we can take a leaf out of the tiger's book. We, too, poor jungle folk, will approach her Majesty's throne with a petition to be accorded the common rights of humanity and the privileges of British subjects. Such privileges were promised to us in the Royal Proclamation.

What the Queen has promised the Queen alone can confirm. What the Queen gave the Queen alone can take away; and the Queen has not yet decreed that we should be deprived of these privileges of equal right, as to habitation, etc.

The Natal Legislature cannot go beyond the Royal Proclamation. The Natal Franchise Bill, the poll-tax and police passes, are just like so many arbitrary proceedings of a despotic Pasha in some remote corner of the Turkish Empire. Originally unlawful, they in time acquire all the semblance and force of law for the province, on the ground of custom, and moreover furnish a precedent and excuse for introduction to other provinces.

To-day it is only a question of a few thousand Indians in Natal and looks rather an isolated and local grievance for the whole of India to bestir itself to redress it. But it is the principle of the measure that is all engrossing. Once give it the semblance of some statutory recognition, in whatever little corner of the British Empire, and it will in time come to form the basis for similar enactments elsewhere, when Ceylon, the Mauritius, the Straits Settlements and Hong-Kong come to be self-governing colonies. In fact some such basis has been already proposed in a scheme to give each of the two latter colonies a further representation in its government.

A step further and we have the old Roman system for the whole Empire—full rights for the white man, whether he be in Africa or Asia. But I cannot say whether the Hindu will take precedence of the Negro or the Negro of the Hindu. The Hindu is more diligent in his school attendance and such things; but the Negro can be more trusted to hit back when assaulted. Which of these qualities would be better appreciated depends much upon the humour of the future law-makers.

Yours, etc.,

35, Devonshire Road, Chiswick, W. C. N. Saldanha.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Thursday, May 18.—In the House of Lords, on the motion of Lord James of Hereford, the Money Lending Bill was read a third time and passed.

In the House of Commons the consideration of the London Government Bill in Committee was resumed and the Bill was reported to the House.

The Peace Conference assembled at The Hague, all the dele-

gates being present. M. de Beaufort, the Netherlands Foreign Minister, presided in the first instance, and delivered an address, in which he eulogized the motives of the Tsar in proposing the Conference, and welcomed the delegates in the name of his sovereign. He then proposed that a telegram of congratulation should be sent to the Tsar. This was approved, after which M. de Staal was elected President of the Conference, and briefly acknowledged the honour. After choosing a vice-president and bureau, the Conference adjourned till to-morrow.

Sir A. Milner telegraphed his acceptance of President Steyn's invitation to meet President Kruger at Bloemfontein. No date was yet fixed for the meeting. President Kruger's reform proposals were laid before the Volksraad at Pretoria.

Mr. Goschen, presiding at a South African dinner, referred in terms of appreciation to the contribution made by Cape Colony to the Imperial Navy, and to the spirit in which the gift had been made. It meant that South Africa looked to the British Navy to defend her against any enemy who might have designs upon her, and he, as representative of the British Navy, accepted that responsibility. In regard to the existing situation in South Africa, there was some cause for anxiety, but they had every hope that President Kruger would recognise the necessity of making some concession to the Uitlanders of the Transvaal. He anticipated good results from the forthcoming meeting between President Kruger and Sir A. Milner.

FRIDAY, May 19.—In the House of Commons Mr. Balfour gave notice that the motion for the grant to Lord Kitchener would be made on June 5.—The House adjourned, for the Whitsuntide recess, until May 31.

The Cost of the Operations in the Sudan formed the subject of a Parliamentary paper issued by the Treasury. The total expenditure charged on the public revenues of the United Kingdom since January, 1883, in connexion with the operations had been £7,890,112.

The chiefs of the Peace Conference delegations met in committee at M. de Staal's hotel. It was understood that the chief business was the nomination of the three sections, or commissions, which were to report on the eight points of the Muravieff circular of January 11.

The conference between Sir A. Milner and President Kruger was fixed to take place at Bloemfontein on the 31st inst. President Kruger agreed only to discuss matters which did not affect the independence of the South African Republic.

SATURDAY, May 20.—The Indian Plague Commission held its final meeting at the India Office. The report was expected to be ready for publication in August.

The Irish National League of Great Britain held its annual convention at Bradford. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., presided. The president in his address said they knew that the dissension in Ireland was disastrous and almost fatal to the movement in Great Britain. Their brothers in America would give as much money as was wanted to a united Ireland, but not one penny for one section against another. If the Irish people sent a united party to Westminster at the next general election he believed they could wring from either party—he did not care which—an Act which would give the destinies of Ireland once more into Irish hands. Mr. O'Connor was re-elected president, and it was decided to hold next year's convention at Bristol.

SUNDAY, May 21.—The American liner "Paris" went ashore on the Manacle Rocks near Falmouth at one o'clock this morning. She was on her way to New York from Southampton, and had called at Cherbourg. It was thought that the mishap was due to the hazy weather and to the flood tide, which seemed to have carried the vessel out of her course. The crew remained on board, while the passengers, numbering over 400, were all safely landed at Falmouth by tugs and boats. Attempts were to be made to get the "Paris" off the rocks.

MONDAY, May 22.—The Whitsuntide bank holiday was observed in London under very unfavourable conditions. The rain, which fell persistently during the morning and more than once after noon, interfered very much with the accustomed outdoor recreation of holiday-makers; but, while the gatherings in the parks and open spaces were much smaller than usual, all the museums, art galleries, and indoor entertainments had an exceptional share of the public patronage. There was a marked falling-off in the day's bookings for railway passenger traffic on short excursions in the neighbourhood of London; but on the other hand the number of passengers who left the metropolis on Friday and Saturday for longer holiday trips was fully up to the average. The annual Cart-horse Parade was held in Regent's Park, and, notwithstanding the inclement weather, it attracted a large number of sightseers. Nearly 800 horses took part in the parade. There was the usual distribution of prizes for long service, and of premiums to deserving drivers.

The "Paris" remained in an unaltered position on the Lowland point of the Manacles. The weather continued fine and the sea smooth, and the work of unloading the vessel was carried on uninterruptedly. Some of the passengers had left for London, but most of them were to be conveyed by special train to Southampton. An attempt was to be made during the spring tides to-morrow or on Thursday to float the vessel.

The Co-operative Congress began at Liverpool, about 1,100 delegates being in attendance. Mr. F. Hardern (Oldham), the new president, delivered his inaugural address, in which he cited statistics to show the progress of the movement during the past ten years. Various deputations were afterwards received; a resolution was adopted expressing the hope that the Hague Conference might be attended with beneficial results; and the annual report of the central board was considered. In the evening a conference took place on co-operative education.

TUESDAY, May 23.—The presidents and vice-presidents of the various commissions were elected at yesterday's sitting of the Peace Conference. A Special Correspondent said that if the conference should fail it would certainly not be the fault of the Anglo-Saxon Powers, both of which were earnestly bent on achieving a satisfactory result. There had already been various small *contretemps* in connexion with the Conference, among them the controversy as to the appointment of Herr von Stengel, the second German delegate. It was doubtful whether the Russians were yet quite reconciled to his presence, and nothing indicated that Russia and Germany were in closer co-operation than any other two Powers.—A private letter from Belgium ascribed the public indifference to the Conference to the fact that it did not intend to discuss the questions which could alone secure peace—disarmament and the suspension of armaments.—Mr. White, the American delegate, was hopeful that the Conference would be able to arrive at a certain result on the subject of mediation and arbitration.

The Peace Society held its annual meeting in the Friends' Meeting-house, Bishopsgate Street, Canon Benham in the chair. A resolution was carried hailing the Peace Conference at The Hague as an event of unexampled significance and promise.

The "Paris" remained in an unchanged position, except that since the cargo was taken out she had risen a little. The officers were hopeful that she would be floated.

The International Miners' Congress passed a resolution in favour of a legal eight-hours day, the only dissentients being the representatives of the Northumberland miners.

The Co-operative Congress was continued at Liverpool. Resolutions were carried approving joint action between trade unionists and co-operators, and approving the principle of the Lord Chief Justice's Bill against secret commissions.

WEDNESDAY, May 24.—The Queen's eightieth birthday anniversary was celebrated with much popular rejoicing throughout the United Kingdom and the Empire, and commemorated in various ways in many foreign countries. At Windsor, where her Majesty was able to participate in them in person, the celebrations had a special character. The town was decorated and a holiday was observed. In the course of the morning the Queen received addresses from the Military Knights of Windsor and the Royal Warrant Holders of Windsor and Eton. A serenade was given in her honour in the Grand Quadrangle of Windsor Castle by local musical societies and the St. George's Chapel and Eton College choirs. After the serenade the Mayor of Windsor was received by her Majesty, who bestowed on him the honour of knighthood. A birthday parade of the 2nd Scots Guards was held at noon opposite the East Terrace of the Castle, and the Queen drove to the place in her garden chaise and saw the troops march past. She afterwards planted an oak in the park in commemoration of the day. In the afternoon a special thanksgiving service was held in St. George's Chapel, and later the Queen drove through some of the streets of Windsor, and was enthusiastically greeted. Though the official celebration of the Queen's birthday in London was not to take place till June 3, there were various observances in connexion with the anniversary. Flags were displayed on many public and private buildings, and the bells of numerous churches were rung at intervals during the day. Thanksgiving services were held at St. Paul's Cathedral—where the Lord Mayor and Corporation attended in state, and the sermon was preached by the Archbishop of Canterbury—at Westminster Abbey, the Chapel Royal, St. James's, St. Clement Danes, and other churches. There were demonstrations at the Foundling Hospital and at the London Board schools, where a half-holiday was given to the children. Military displays took place at Woolwich, Aldershot, Chatham, Dover, and Dublin, a combined naval and military parade at Devonport, and a naval parade at Portsmouth. In many provincial towns the celebrations were on an extensive scale.

THURSDAY, May 25.—Examination showed that the "Paris" had been very seriously injured. Yesterday she resisted every effort to tug her off the rocks, and doubt was expressed whether this would be accomplished. Further attempts were being made to-day. Captain Batchelor, the expert of the Liverpool Salvage Association, who had been sent down to superintend operations, expressed the view that, the ship being pierced by rocks, it would be necessary to lift her.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, May 5.

The Select Committee on the Calcutta Municipal Bill has submitted its report which is universally disapproved. The native community of the Metropolis is extremely disappointed at the barren results of the Committee's deliberation. There has been, no doubt, a tinkering here and there of some of the objectionable sections; but the important clauses which have reference to the constitution and the powers of the co-ordinate authorities remain almost without amendment. The report itself seems to have been hurriedly drawn up. It is sketchy and uninforming. There are obvious signs of its having been rushed through without patient and careful deliberation, and without regard to the numerous objections raised by the different memorialists. There is ample evidence on the face of the report that the majority composing the Select Committee have gone through the solemn farce of "considering" the Bill with the determination to adhere to a foregone resolution. So far, then, the majority, official and officialised, has only perfunctorily discharged its duty and exposed itself to the reproach of partiality. No wonder the two popular representatives on the Select Committee have entered a long protest against the report of the majority. Their minute of dissent may practically be taken as the minority report. It remains to be seen how the Legislative Council will now deal with both reports. The general feeling seems to be that the Government of Sir John Woodburn will not yield, and that, therefore, all hope of a genuine improvement in the Bill may be abandoned. The Bengalees are, however, not sitting still. They are continuing their agitation which later on is likely to grow to large proportions. It will not be surprising if the Bengal Government adopts clever tactics. It may not, perhaps, call the Legislative Council together till autumn when Parliament will have prorogued. Then meetings may be called and the Bill hurriedly passed. There will in that case be no opportunity for Parliament to discuss the matter in time and insist upon Lord George Hamilton's fulfilling the promise made in the debate on the Address. Once the Bill is passed, it is doubtful if Parliament could much interfere with it. The only hope lies in the ratepayers praying the Viceroy to veto the Bill when it goes up for his sanction. All will depend on what view Lord Curzon may take. Perhaps the wisest course would be to hang it up *sine die*. Indian administrators will never acknowledge their errors. Untold mischief may be done to the country. But it would be a miracle if any Indian Viceroy or Governor publicly confessed to error.

It is reported that the evil of sending civilians from pillar to post, instead of assigning them to a district for a reasonable length of time, is now under investigation by the Imperial Government with a view to its removal. The evil is growing into an administrative scandal. Almost everywhere there is a paucity of officers to discharge the ordinary district duties—so many go on furlough; so many others act for those who are enjoying their leave. The result is that a number of junior civilians are pitchforked into places for which they are not qualified by experience. Almost every district has its quota of boy judges and boy collectors. The efficiency of the administration is of course impaired, while the people chafe under such conditions of government. In Bombay this has been the case to no small extent. Last autumn a question was put on the subject; but the Government adroitly parried the inconvenient topic by referring the interpolator to the Civil List. It remains to be seen how Lord Curzon will solve this tough question. The evils of the present state of affairs are obvious enough to enlightened Indians, who ask whether India can ever be efficiently and economically administered without extensive native agency in the highest offices of the State.

A good deal of irritation has of late been prevalent in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh owing to the additional burdens laid on the shoulders of talukdars by way of enhanced road-cess. These landholders bitterly complain of the injustice of the levy. Their case has been ably put in pamphlet form by Sheik Inayab Allah, under the title of "A Plea for Justice!" Mr. Inayab Allah is himself an Oudh talukdar, and writes with knowledge of the facts and the hardships suffered. The *Pioneer* in one of its recent issues sympathetically reviewed the pamphlet and exhorted the authorities to do justice to the oppressed zemindars—a staunch and loyal class of gentlemen farmers. In the first place the complaint is that the imposition of a road-cess during the course of land survey settlement is a violation of a solemn engagement. Secondly, apart from this violation, the cesses were borne so long as the assessments were light. But what is now happening is that assessments are enhanced and the cesses also. This is a double hardship. The *Pioneer*, while defending the policy of Government on grounds of financial exigency (not quite a fair defence), is obliged to admit that reasonable reparation ought to be made to these oppressed landholders. The ground on which it recommended such reparation is fair. If the Government takes the lion's share of the growing revenue, it ought in fairness to bear some portion of the cesses. It is to be hoped the talukdars will receive equitable treatment at the hands of the State. The latter-day policy of arbitrary enhancements of revenue is oppressive and a potent cause of discontent. The whole agrarian problem, in reference both to the rayat and to the landowner is full of danger. The sooner the State earnestly grapples with it the better. The political danger of the situation has been pointed out time out of mind these twenty-two years past.

The programme lately announced of *fêting* the retired Viceroy has excited little interest here, though it has elicited from some of the leading Native journals very unpleasant comments. The upshot of their criticism is that Lord Northbrook and other Whig noblemen, as well as Lord Rosebery, may well join hands with their Tory opponents and feast the retired Viceroy because they are bound to repair the icy neglect with which they treated him on his coming home. India does not grudge these dinners which mean nothing. But India is not to be deceived if entertainment is to be interpreted by the principal entertainers as approval of the many mischievous acts of Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty. So far as that is concerned, India long since pronounced its verdict, which impartial history is certain to justify. So we may leave this belated sociability to oblivion, though India will always link the name of Elgin the Second with the disastrous Chitral and Tirah expeditions and the reactionary and mischievous sedition laws of 1898.

CASTE REGIMENTS AND COMPANIES.

[From a Correspondent.]

On page 142 of India (March 17) were recorded a question put by Mr. Philip Stanhope and the answer given by the Secretary of State for India, the latter comprising the following very notable avowal: "The whole of the Native army in India is now organised either in class regiments or in class squadrons and class company regiments," etc. That striking and, as some think, ominous statement has not as yet attracted the attention it demands. This may be accounted for in two ways, namely, (*a*) those Anglo-Indians who have kept themselves in touch with changes in Indian army organisation during the last dozen or fifteen years have only gradually become familiar with the results of those changes; (*b*) those few public men here who take a sane interest in Indian affairs have not had opportunity to take note of reorganisations which have mainly been carried out departmentally and so failed to challenge public attention. It may be said of both these classes that neither seems to have realised the gravity and scope of this almost revolutionary change in modern Indian military organisation. Besides it must be assumed that a considerable proportion of the former large class will have approved, more or less, of these silently effected changes so tersely described in the full and frank reply to Mr. Stanhope on March 16.

It is not intended here to enter into a discussion of this semi-technical subject, seeing that the materials for such examination, being locked up in official despatches and departmental correspondence, are withheld from independent public observation. As to this there was a very significant reserve in the offer made by the Secretary of State to present a memorandum "which would show the changes which have been made of late years," *but* "without entering into the *reasons* for the changes." So we must leave the "reasons" alone for the present, or evolve them gradually for ourselves. Meantime, as one step in this direction, it may be useful to quote a few passages in a private letter from a retired Indian General Officer, who has had his attention drawn to the subject. He excuses himself from going into the matter seriously on the ground of the many years that have elapsed since his retirement, and his close absorption in certain other public questions. He remarks:—

> I am out of touch with Indian army matters now; but as to caste regiments, or as composed on bases of race or creed, that plan seems to me as bad now as when denounced by John Jacob nearly fifty years ago.

Here it may be explained that General Jacob, who established the Sind frontier force, and in so doing tamed and organised the Beluchis, also the wild tribes on the north of the Bolan border, used to say: "Don't talk to me of recruiting by caste or creed; when my men are in line the only *deen* they know is the *Sirkar*"—that is, their faith is the Government itself, then the Old Company.

Then our military friend goes on with these comprehensive remarks:—

> The Bombay army will now, doubtless, be under the Simla thumb in things military. The water-tight bulk-heads [*i.e.*, the three separate Presidential armies] have been knocked out of the ship to enable her (I suppose) to work more cheaply. There is now only one army in the four *corps d'armée*. The staff corps system destroyed the reserve of officers. The adoption of caste as a corner stone of regimental organisation will destroy the supremacy of discipline; and centralisation at Simla is doing the rest. The devotion and improved better general training of commissioned officers, European and Native, will disguise the deterioration of the army as a fighting

machine; but I think it would go to pieces at the first touch of European enemies.

It may be remarked in passing that the writer does not indicate when and where Indian regiments are likely to come in contact with "European enemies." But we may be reminded that such a contingency is being made possible by that other revolutionary practice in recent years of employing Indian troops in Africa and elsewhere "beyond the external frontiers of her Majesty's Indian possessions."

Turning to the subject of caste, race, or class companies within regiments—the Indian Secretary's "class squadron and class companies" (cavalry and infantry respectively)—this retired officer proceeds to poke fun at the system; but in so doing, by applying it by way of parable to the internal economy of British regiments, he makes the absurdity plain even to stay-at-home civilians. This is how he puts it:—

Who would recommend Baptist and Unitarian companies, or carpenter or bricklayers' companies in English regiments? Take another practical illustration of the working of such a plan: There might be a vacancy for a colour-sergeant in the Wesleyan company, though the best man in the regiment might be a sergeant in the Roman Catholic company; but he would have to wait, and the Colonel would have to promote inferior talent in the Wesleyan company. Take another instance: a run of promotions might make the Congregational sergeants all young men, while the corporals in the Church of England company would be souring in undeserved neglect because their sergeants did not die off. These internal difficulties might be lessened somewhat if the whole regiment were Wesleyan, Baptist, or Episcopalian. Then I suppose the commissioned officers would have to be limited too; it would never do to put a Roman Catholic colonel to command, say, the Quaker regiment! [The counterpart of this phenomenon in India would be a regiment of Jains, peaceable folk who would no more handle lethal weapons than would the Russian Stundists.] Thus the commander-in-chief would be hampered at every turn with questions to which "how to take care of Dowb" would be a trifle. So this plan of artificial class segregation in the rank and file of the Indian army introduces a totally irrelevant test into a matter which should only depend on the fitness of each man to serve.

This may seem a somewhat rough way of passing sentence on an elaborate scheme of internal army re-organisation which has been worked out for years past behind departmental screens, removed from the daylight of publicity, and which has for result, as frankly avowed by the Indian Secretary, that "the whole of the Native Army in India is now organised either in class regiments or in class squadrons and class company regiments." But there are, or may be, let us say, graver considerations than those touched upon in my military correspondent's sketch, also possible eventualities suggested by these changes that require more serious examination when the whole subject shall be fully gone into. We do not overlook the modification of the plan, as to limitations in the "classes" in each regiment, as duly mentioned in this memorable statement by the Secretary of State. We are also quite aware of many specious, indeed fascinating arguments by which this far-reaching change will be defended by certain highly-placed military theorists, British rather than Anglo-Indian. But we must be content for the present with having fairly raised the question, being convinced that it may be replete with grave issues in the future affairs of our Indian Empire.

LORD ELGIN AT THE NORTHBROOK CLUB.

MORE OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

THE "STANDARD."

Well may Lord Rosebery congratulate himself on his persuasive powers, and claim a moral commission on the reputation which, as an expert in negotiations, he was the means of enabling Lord Elgin to earn. Judged by the colder standard of judicial appraisement, his estimate of his friend's place in the roll of great Viceroys may be open to question. But the most grudging observer will not deny that no Ruler of India was ever confronted within so brief a term of office with a more complex and embarrassing array of difficulties. By the irony of fate, the peace-loving son of a peace-loving father was compelled, by circumstances over which he had no control, to devote himself largely to directing operations of war. He had, in fact, to coerce in order to pacify, and there was an impressive earnestness in the assurance which he gave to the members of the Northbrook Club last night, that Sir William Lockhart's desire to avoid hostilities, and to resort where possible to the methods of conciliation, was no less energetic than his own. . . . The story of the Famine need not be retold. In the record of the Relief operations, may be read the best possible evidence of the sincerity with which Anglo-Indian officials have laid to heart the doctrine that our first and paramount duty is to act as wise, thoughtful, and, above all, capable friends of the masses of the people. It is too much to expect that we can avert external danger by convincing native society that it is to their interest that our rule should be maintained. But we should seek to win their esteem and gratitude without any commercial calculation as to its strategic or political value. Lord Elgin would be the first to allow that the happy issue of his toils was due to the devotion and skill of the permanent servants of the State, in all ranks, who had to do battle with revolt on the frontier, and with plague and with drought throughout vast provinces.—(May 17.)

THE "ST. JAMES'S GAZETTE."

After all the Opposition, unorganised and fevered though it be, is composed of brother Englishmen. Lord Elgin is one of its friends. He has been Viceroy of India, and a very good Viceroy too. Now he has come back and his brother Gladstonians give him a dinner. Of course they made speeches, and Lord Rosebery led the band. His lordship will not accept the rule that it is impolite to speak of halters where a member of the family has been hanged. So that tender business of the strayed leaders had his attention once more. It might, we cannot but think, have been spared. There was quite enough to speak about in the events of Lord Elgin's Viceroyalty, and his own most honourable discharge of his duties. We applaud all that can be said on this subject with both hands. Before a gentleman goes to India as Viceroy he is a party man, and he may become a party man again when he returns. But while he is there he represents the Crown, and is of no party. Lord Elgin gave an admirable illustration of that truth by the line he took in regard to the trouble on the North-West Frontier.—(May 17).

THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."

The welcome to Lord Elgin, given yesterday at the Northbrook Club, was entirely his due. Few Viceroys have ever gone out to India such absolutely unknown qualities; few have had to contend with greater anxieties; none has emerged from those difficulties, and, it must be added, from the factious opposition of political associates, with greater credit. Lord Elgin's solid Scots commonsense has carried him through crises that would have killed a man of Lord Canning's nervous temperament. He returns to find Lord Rosebery humourously speculating on his future and that of the party to which he still belongs, it would seem. The ex-Viceroy would make an unexceptionable Cabinet Minister, though his chance may not come just yet awhile. In any case he is not "finished" as French Governors are when their term of office comes to an end. We do not forget our public servants with the easy indifference of some democracies.—(May 17.)

THE "BRADFORD OBSERVER."

The welcome given to Lord Elgin on his return from India after occupying the Viceroyalty for five years was one in which the public will heartily join. Lord Elgin, as the Earl of Rosebery indicated in proposing his health, accepted the post with much modest misgiving as to his capacity for governing our great dependency, and only yielded to Lord Rosebery's strong persuasion. He was then, and is still, a young man in statecraft, and his selection was due to Mr. Gladstone's faculty for discovering latent talent. It cannot be said that Lord Elgin's five years' rule has been brilliant or marked by any striking changes for the benefit of India. The period of his Viceroyalty has been rather one of successive misfortunes for the dependency and difficulties for its rulers, and Lord Elgin's best claims to distinction are the ability with which he carried out the measures necessitated by the scourges of famine and plague. The war troubles, which Lord Elgin regards as having been inevitable, though contrary to his peaceable disposition, would in all probability have been avoided if the principles of government which the ex-Viceroy proclaimed in 1894 at Lahore had been acted upon, and though the responsibility for the aggressive policy which led to the frontier conflagration must rest with the home Government, it cannot be forgotten that the ex-Viceroy accepted the opinions on which that policy was based. It is more to Lord Elgin's credit that he made a stand for a sound fiscal policy, which his successor has lightly abandoned at the bidding of Mr. Chamberlain.—(May 18.)

Imperial Parliament.

Friday, May 19.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

On the motion of Sir HENRY FOWLER, a Return was granted for Copy of the Indian Financial Statement for 1899-1900, and of the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General thereon.

BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether in the forthcoming conference between Sir A. Milner and President Kruger, the British representative would discuss questions relating to the grave disabilities imposed upon British Indian subjects by the South African Government for some years past, with the view of remedying the same:

And, whether Sir A. Milner had been furnished by the Colonial Office with specific instructions on the subject.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I have recently instructed Sir A. Milner on the subject of the British Indians in the Transvaal, and the matter will no doubt be discussed by him and President Kruger.

THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.
SIR HENRY FOWLER'S MOTION.
AMENDMENT BY SIR HOWARD VINCENT.

The following notices of Motion appear on the Order Paper of the House of Commons.

Sir HENRY FOWLER,—Indian Tariff Act, 1899,—That an humble Address be presented to her Majesty, praying that her Majesty will be pleased to disallow the Indian Tariff Act, 1899.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT,—Indian Tariff Act, 1899,—As an Amendment to Sir Henry Fowler's Motion, leave out "to disallow," and insert "having regard to the condition of affairs produced in her Majesty's loyal Colonies in the West Indies, to direct that legislation be as soon as practicable introduced into this House upon the model of."

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